



# Newsletter



April 2015

## GLASGOW WEST HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

### 15th Annual Tenants Conference (ATC)

Thanks to everyone who came along to our ATC and for your contributions on the Day. With a Special General Meeting immediately before the ATC, and a Bookworms Event held at the same time, it was a busy morning. Your patience on the Day is appreciated; and we thank you for your feedback which informed our rent decision for 2015/16 and helps shape our future services and plans.



Our next ATC will take place on Saturday, 26/01/16 and is a good opportunity to catch up with other GW residents and meet with our staff. We look forward to seeing you there!

### Consumer Panel (CP)

The CP consists of GW tenant volunteers who give up their time on a few occasions over the year to comment on the services we provide "from a tenant's perspective". Reflecting on the feedback from the 15th ATC, the Panel met recently to discuss our rent setting process and this feedback will inform discussions at a future meeting of our Management Committee. If you are interested in attending the CP Meetings, please advise Carly McFadyen on 0141 331 6650.

### Office Closure Dates

Our offices (and the Hyndland concierge station) will be closed on **Friday 03/04/15** and **Monday 06/04/15** and will reopen at 9am on **Tuesday 07/04/15**.

The Blythswood and St Vincent Terrace concierge stations will operate as normal during the above dates.

**Refer to our calendar, website or office answer phone for out-of-hours emergency contact details.**

### AGM Reminder/Membership

The years AGM will be held on **Saturday 27/06/15 at 11am, at The Sandyford Henderson Church, 13 Kelvinhaugh Street, Glasgow, G3 8NU.**

Please let us know by Thursday 25/06/15 if you require transport, or use of the crèche facility. Invitations to the AGM will be issued by 31/05/15.

If you are interested in becoming a member of GWA or want to find out more about membership, please contact Carol Nicol on 0141 331 6664



### Annual Report Requests

If you would like a copy of the Annual Report please let us know by email: [admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk](mailto:admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk); Telephone: 0141 331 6650.

The Annual Report will continue to be available on request from our office, from your concierge station, or online at [www.gwha.org.uk](http://www.gwha.org.uk)



**If you would prefer to receive the newsletter in a different format or font, please contact the office and we will do our best to accommodate your request.**

## Rent/Service Charges 15/16

Our Management Committee (MC) Meeting on 27/01/15 considered the rent review feedback and you will by now have received details of the rent you are due to pay from 28/03/15. The MC were mindful of the mixed support for the proposed 3.1%, and in reaching agreement on 2.9%, were clear that the results of the independent Stock Condition Survey, and the SFHA's affordability research, would be key influences in the rent consultation for 2016/17. Please contact the Tenancy Management Team on 0141 331 6650 for further information.

## Service Charges

Services charges reflect the actual cost of providing the service, and include items such as stair/window cleaning and garden/back-court maintenance. Full details of the services provided at your property are included within your Tenancy Agreement.



## Rent Reward Scheme Draws

Congratulations and a big thank-you to the 79 Tenants who received their £52 reward on completion of a full year's membership of the Rent Reward Scheme. Membership is dependent on fulfilling all aspects of the tenancy, with other benefits including our new home contents insurance initiative, free entry to a quarterly prize draw and an annual £250 draw at our AGM.

Contact Kevin Crawford on 0141 331 6653 for more details of this coveted scheme.

## December Prize Draw Winners



## Mutual Exchange

Would you like to swap home?  
Do you live in a first floor property or have lift access to your flat?  
Do you have 1 bedroom and gas central heating?

A Tenant living within an excellent sheltered complex in the Partick area is looking for a move.

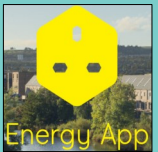
This property is in a quiet development just off Dumbarton road. It is on the 1st floor and is a good size 1 bedroom flat. Please note as this is a sheltered property the person moving in must require some housing support. Contact Elaine Giles on 0141 331 6668 for further information.

## Energy Advice

Can you afford not to switch?

According to recent reports, millions of households are paying between £158 and £234 a year too much for energy.

Visit [www.switch.which.co.uk](http://www.switch.which.co.uk) or any price comparison website for more information. If you need help or advice call **GHEAT on 0800 092 9002** or download the new Glasgow Energy App.

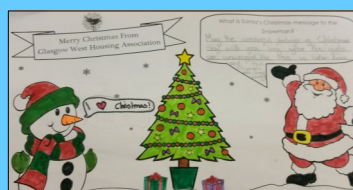


## Distribution of Festive Gifts

Over the festive period, staff personally delivered 344 gifts to our elderly and/or vulnerable households. The funding for these gifts comes from GWAH's Community Fund.

## Children's Festive Colouring Competition Results

Congratulations to Brooke McKenzie (pictured below with Lynne Smith) & Sehar Iqbal for their winning entries and a big thanks to all the children (and parents) for the time and effort put into creating colourful and imaginative pictures. The entries to the Festive Colouring Competition are enjoyed by all who view them and prove a challenge to the judging panel to pick just one winner in each category.



Sehar Iqbal's  
Winning Entry



Brooke McKenzie's  
Winning Entry



# SPOT LIGHT ON BENEFITS

If you need advice or assistance on your entitlement to benefits, or how these changes may affect you, please contact us on 0141 331 6665



Universal Credit (UC) is a single benefit for **working-age** people. It will gradually replace most means-tested benefits such as JSA, ESA, tax credits & **Housing Benefit**.

UC will be rolled out in Glasgow from June 2015. Initially it will not affect existing GW tenants, however, to start preparing for the changes, you should:

- Set up a bank account (not a post office account) to pay bills and your rent by direct debit,
- Think about how you will access the internet and set up an email account,
- Plan your monthly budget to reflect your benefit which will be paid in one lump sum.

## Benefit Sanctions

If you receive a letter from the Jobcentre+/DWP advising you that your JSA or ESA has been sanctioned & your payments suspended... **CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY FOR ADVICE**

## DLA → PIP

The roll out of the new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in Glasgow has begun. This means if your DLA is due for reassessment your claim will move to PIP.

If you have an indefinite DLA award it is likely this will move to PIP from October 2015 onwards.

You will receive notification from the DWP in relation to any changes to your DLA. When you get your letter please contact us so we can assist you with your new claim for PIP.

## Welfare Benefits Surgeries

Please drop in on the following dates:

Keith/Walker Court	1st Fri of the Month	10am - 11am
Hyndland	3rd Thurs of the Month	10am - 12noon
Blythswood Court	Last Thurs of the Month	9am - 11am
St Vincent Terrace	Last Tues of the Month	9am - 11am

## Fraud/Scam Letters

Every year millions of people lose money through scams. Having recently received a number of scam emails ourselves we thought it best to pass on this information.

### How can I spot a scam?

- The call, letter, email or text has come out of the blue,
- They are asking you to send money,
- They are telling you to respond quickly so you don't get time to think about it,
- They are telling you to keep it a secret,
- They seem to be offering you something for nothing.

**Remember if it seems too good to be true – it probably is!**

### How can I protect myself better?

- Never give out contact details like your name, phone number, address, or your bank details to strangers or to people who should have this information already. Your bank will never phone you to ask for this information,
- Shred anything with your personal information or bank details on – don't just throw it away,
- Don't reply to spam mail, texts or emails,
- Say "no thank you" politely and put the phone down if they persist. Never call someone back if you don't know who you are phoning.

If you have been scammed, or think someone has tried to scam you, contact **Action Fraud**.



## Committee Training Forum (CTF)

The CTF provides an opportunity for tenants and members of GWHA, who are interested in joining the Management Committee, to take part in a learning programme. The programme is designed to equip prospective members with the competencies and confidence to become a potential Committee Member. Anyone interested in joining the CTF should contact Carol Nicol, Corporate Officer, on 0141 331 6664.



# Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

Although all our SHQS projects are on site, unfortunately progress has not been at the pace anticipated, with delays due to unforeseen works, planning consents, and difficulties in obtaining access. We are hugely disappointed that our properties will not be 100% compliant by the target 31/03/15, however we remain committed to delivering the SHQS, and will report on our year end performance in our next Newsletter.

If you have not provided access for SHQS works, please reconsider. Our Asset Management Team will be happy to meet with you to talk through the works required and will support you as much as possible. This work is essential to protect your home for future generations.

Tania Romany with her new Kitchen



# Improving our Repairs Service

When we carried out our Satisfaction Survey last year, you told us that you are not happy with some aspects of our repairs service and we are making changes to help address this:

## Repairs Surveys

To make sure the service is improving, we have appointed Management Information, the company that carried out our Satisfaction Survey, to carry out monthly telephone surveys to a sample of tenants who report repairs. The results of these surveys will be crucial in informing our actions, and your participation would be most appreciated.





## Repairs Team

Our Property Services Team has been restructured, and we now have a dedicated repairs team, with Jeff Woods, the Repairs Service Co-ordinator. This will help ensure a clear focus on response repairs, with the Team motivated to delivering an excellent repairs service and improved satisfaction levels.



# Rechargeable Repairs

When you sign a Tenancy Agreement, you are entering in to a contract with us. This contract commits you, as the Tenant, and us, as the Landlord, to meet certain terms and conditions, including repairs. Examples of our respective repairing responsibilities are:

Our Responsibility	Your Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building fabric repairs</li> <li>• Repairs to maintain the property and keep it wind and water-tight</li> <li>• Replacement of elements due to wear and tear (e.g. Sanitary appliances, windows)</li> <li>• Tracking and repairing water leaks</li> <li>• Re-sealing your bath where the mastic fails</li> <li>• Replacing tap heads</li> <li>• Fixing window catches/cords</li> <li>• Central heating/Electrical wiring faults</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blocked drains/toilet (where blockage can be cleared with drain cleaner etc.)</li> <li>• Lock change in the event of lost keys</li> <li>• Securing/replacing doors/locks following forced access</li> <li>• Element replacement (door, cupboard etc.) where tenant damage</li> <li>• Light bulb/battery replacement</li> <li>• TV signal failure due to TV tuning</li> <li>• All appliances (white goods, TV etc.)</li> <li>• Treating insect infestations</li> </ul> 

If a repair is required within your home, and the repair is your responsibility, you need to make arrangements for the work to be carried out. You can decide who does the work, providing it is of a good standard and is carried out by a qualified tradesperson. If you want us to instruct a contractor to do the work for you, **you need to pay for the repair in advance**. If you are in any doubt about responsibility for a repair, please contact the Repairs Team on 0141 331 6652 or visit our website [www.gwha.org.uk](http://www.gwha.org.uk).

You should note that abuse of our out-of-hours service for repairs that are your responsibility is a breach of your Tenancy and the debt, which will include the contractor's Emergency Call-Out charge (generally around £100) will be due by you. Non-payment of rechargeable repairs may affect your ability to transfer home and/or to participate in our investment programme.



## Repairs Receipts

Many years ago, with support from tenants, we stopped routinely issuing repairs acknowledgement slips.

Tenants agreed with us, that the cost (around £5000 per annum) which is funded from rental income, far outweighed the benefits.

Recently it has been suggested that we reinstate the receipt system, and we would like to know what you think.

If you feel strongly that we should routinely provide receipts, please advise Ciaran O'Grady on 0141 331 6652 or email: [repairs@glasgowwestha.co.uk](mailto:repairs@glasgowwestha.co.uk).

If you would like a receipt when reporting a repair, please let us know and we will be happy to oblige.

## Attention All Owners

We have negotiated with our contractor, City Building, the opportunity for homeowners to buy in to the annual gas servicing and all-inclusive maintenance contracts. These cost £65 and £120 per annum, respectively, with scope to pay GWAH by monthly direct debit.

If you are interested in finding out more about this, please contact our Property Services Team on 0141 331 6652.



## Do you want to Grow Wild this spring?!



Are you interested in growing some native wild seeds? We have 100 seed packs to give away to our residents, sponsored of the Big Lottery and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Please come along to the **'Back Garden' in Brechin Street on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May between 12-4pm** where we will be holding a Coffee Afternoon and will be giving away seed packs as well as some Bee Houses.

Karen Hillhouse, Estate Services Team, will be there with the G3 Growers to offer information, help and gardening advice on the day. If you require further information contact Karen on 0141 428 3242

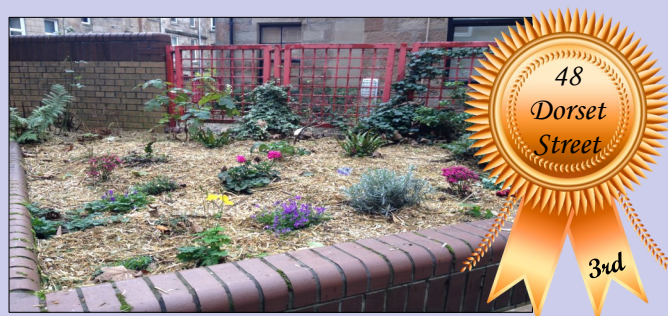
## Garden Grant

If you are interested in applying for a Garden Grant to add a splash of colour to your back court or front garden, please contact Karen Hillhouse on 0141 428 3242 for further information or email [khillhouse@glasgowwestha.co.uk](mailto:khillhouse@glasgowwestha.co.uk)



## Good Close/Garden Competition

### Garden



### Close



Thank you to everyone who participated in last years competition!

### 2015 Judging

Judging will take place mid July. Entry and Nomination forms are available from Karen Hillhouse on 0141 428 3242

If you think your close or garden should be considered then why not enter the competition.

Alternatively, if you think your neighbours garden or close deserves recognition, why not nominate them.

## Annual Staff Conference

Our ASC on 17/03/15 was a hive of activity, with staff taking some time out of the office to reflect on our performance over the last year, to plan for changes in the sector (e.g. universal credit), and to set targets and agree initiatives and service improvements for 2015/16.



## Anne Gould Award

This award was introduced in 2008 (GWhA's 30th Anniversary). The main criteria for "Nomination" are that staff members:

- Go out their way to regularly deliver exemplary customer service,
- Develop an initiative that enhances the customer experience,
- Are always upbeat/smiles in the face of adversity.

**Well done to this year's Nominees, and special mention to our Tenancy Management Team**



Tenancy Management Team

**and to Jan Tullis, this year's Award Winner.**



Jan Tullis

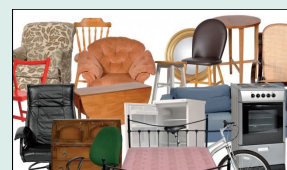
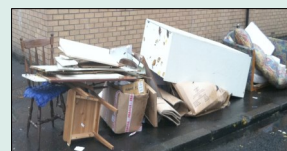
## Bulk Uplift

We are still experiencing problems with bulk uplifts taking at least 21 days to be uplifted. To arrange for a bulk uplift of items that cannot be reused please call **0141 287 9700**. Always ask for a job reference number and keep a note of it until the item/s are uplifted.

## National Re-Use Line

If you have any items of furniture or household goods that could be reused, please contact National Re-Use on **0800 0665 820**.

They can pick up your unwanted items for reuse by local community organisations benefitting the environment and helping local people. You can also call them for general advice and information on recycling.



## Easter Events

There is lots going on in Glasgow this Easter, see below for a small selection of events and for more information please visit **www.whatsonglasgow.co.uk**

### Drop-In Puppet Making & Café Day!

5th & 6th April,  
11am to 4pm @ The  
Scottish Mask & Puppet  
Centre, West End.  
£1.50 for 1 /  
£2.50 for 2

### About Experimenting with Pre-History

13th - 17th April, 11am -  
1pm. A week long  
course @ Kelvingrove  
Museum.  
For ages 11-14  
Free!

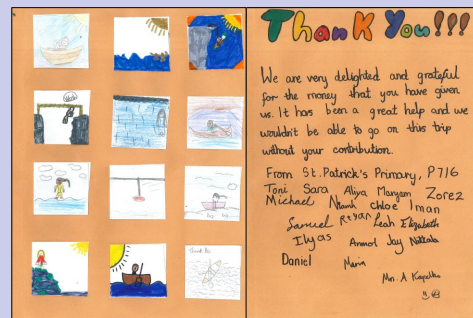
### Family Spring Holiday Programme,

Gallery of Modern Art  
Royal Exchange  
Square, G1 3AH  
Mon 6th - Thurs 9th &  
Mon 13th - Thurs 16th.  
10am - 12pm  
Free!

## Community Fund

The staff tuck shop raised £140 throughout 2014 for the GWhA charities fund.

Letter from children at St Patrick's Primary School.



5 Royal Crescent Glasgow G3 7SL

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Email: [admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk](mailto:admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk) • Website: [www.gwha.org.uk](http://www.gwha.org.uk)

Office opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday - 9am to 4pm.  
Tuesday - 11.30am to 4pm. Appointments are available at other times on request.

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